



Paramedic Scott Neusch demonstrates medical equipment he uses daily on the job.

# A Matter of Stayin'

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Mike's your average USS *Anzio* (CG 68) Sailor: young, married and, admittedly, occasionally given to not wearing his seat belt when he gets behind the wheel of a car. After witnessing a presentation Monday, Dec. 8, 2003, though, he will be a little more inclined to use seat belts all the time.

Mike and his shipmates sat through a session of *Street Smart*, a dramatic, gripping program that takes audiences into the kinds of life-changing experiences that firefighters and paramedics face every day on the streets. These streets are where the crashes occur...where poor choices are played out...where teamwork is a must...where split seconds can save a life.

For an hour and a half, Florida paramedics Scott McIntyre and Scott Neusch, who are part of Florida SAFE (Stay Alive From Education), Inc., walked Mike and his shipmates through what happens at a trauma scene. Watching the paramedics use medical equipment they employ daily in their jobs, the Sailors could see and feel what it's like to try saving a life—from taking a pulse, to loading the victim onto a backboard, to simulating an IV line.

In case you're thinking *Street Smart* was just one

more boring lecture for these Sailors, you're mistaken. Rather, it was and is a no-holds-barred presentation, featuring graphic photos and descriptions of real-life trauma incidents—one that gets the audience involved. For instance, Mike [mentioned in the opening paragraph] became the make-believe victim of a car wreck in which he was driving home from a party after drinking too much. He crashed into the rear of a garbage truck while going 45 mph.

Using this example, the paramedics introduced the Sailors to the power that can come from making the right choices—everything from choosing to have a designated driver (and never drinking underage or using illegal drugs) to choosing to wear a seat belt. The Sailors came to understand the consequences of their actions and the importance and value of their own lives.

"Why would a Navy ship request such training?" perhaps you're asking. It's real simple—the CO of *Anzio* and his crew are dedicated to our goal of reducing mishaps 50 percent by 2005. And what better way to get started than by attacking the No. 1 killer of Sailors and Marines worldwide—traffic accidents.

As reported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, highways claimed 42,815 lives in 2002, an increase of 1.5 percent from 2001 and the highest level in 12 years. Officials at NHTSA remain frustrated by the high number of deaths caused by drunken drivers. Numbering 17,419, alcohol-related fatalities accounted for 41 percent of the 2002 total. Fifty-nine percent of those killed in 2002 accidents also weren't wearing seat belts, said NHTSA.

In a meeting with employees from NHTSA and other safety agencies, Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta said his priority for the next 18 months will be to reduce traffic deaths and injuries. "Once and for all,

# Alive



we must resolve the national epidemic on our highways,” Mineta remarked. He said a first step would be to pass laws requiring seat-belt use in every state. Right now, only 21 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia have primary belt laws, which allow police to pull over motorists for failure to wear a seat belt.

It’s difficult to understand why more people don’t wear seat belts when, as reported by paramedics Scott McIntyre and Scott Neusch, “You’re 25 times more likely to die if you’re ejected from a vehicle than if you wear your seat belt.”

You don’t have to sell Mike’s shipmate, Scott, on wearing primary restraints. He has been wearing them for a long time. “Seat belts had been mandatory in my native Texas for several years when I started driving,” said Scott, “and, besides that, my uncle was a Houston police officer.” His wife also has worked in an emergency room.

Neither do you have to convince two young ladies who attended a *Street Smart* presentation at a high school in November 2003. As explained by paramedic Scott McIntyre, a school-resource officer came in during a break to tell the paramedics that two students just had been in a car crash not far from the school. These young ladies had been in the presentation and had left to get some lunch when they had a rollover crash. Both had worn their seat belts and walked away with only minor injuries.

“It takes too long [*Two or three seconds? Gimme a break!*] to put on,” “it’s not cool,” or “it messes up my clothes”—these are some of the excuses Scott

(Top left) Paramedic Scott McIntyre kicks off *Street Smart* presentation. (Bottom left) Anzio Sailors see graphic photos. (Right) Paramedic Scott Neusch demonstrates more emergency medical equipment.

McIntyre and Scott Neusch routinely hear for not wearing seat belts. To those of you who think that way, consider this reality: It takes only a split second to die if you have a crash and aren’t wearing a seat belt. ■

*Sponsored by Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc., Street Smart is presented free of charge—usually to schools and community organizations. Now, though, Anheuser-Busch is opening the door to Navy commands interested in educating their Sailors about making responsible choices. For more information about scheduling a presentation, contact your local Anheuser-Busch wholesaler or distributor, or write to Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.; Consumer Awareness and Education Department; One Busch Place, 202-7; St. Louis, Mo. 63118. Commands in the Hampton Roads, Virginia area should contact Kim Tamburino at the Hoffman Beverage Co. (phone: 757-552-8336, e-mail: ktamburino@hoffmanbeverage.com).*

*You also can request Street Smart workshops from the non-profit Florida SAFE, Inc., but the cost per day (for up to three presentations) is \$1,500. For more information, visit their website at [www.safeprogram.com](http://www.safeprogram.com).*